

Barnet well worth a second bite

WYCOMBE WANDERERS (0) 0

Attendance:
4,300

BARNET (0) 0

AS Dexter Adams planned and Wycombe Wanderers must have feared, Barnet were still in the F.A. Cup on Saturday evening. Watched by a big crowd that included Sir Stanley Rous, president of F.I.F.A., they emerged from an absorbing, colourful fourth qualifying round tie at Loakes Park thoroughly deserving a draw. The result was scrupulously fair, but if in the final analysis Barnet owed a replay to their unflinching defence, that was not the way it was intended to be.

With the masterful Ward back to make his unmistakable mark on proceedings, they looked ambitiously for a win at the first attempt. A little more steadiness in front of goal would have done the trick.

All the same, it says a lot for Barnet — who recalled George for Gregory — that they played enterprisingly enough to neutralise Wycombe's ground advantage. Wycombe, in fact, seemed quite incapable of profiting from their notorious side-to-side slope.

STURDY

The match was, from first to last, full of attack with the teams delicately balanced. Delaney and King were sturdy pillars at the heart of the defences and Ward the chief purveyor in midfield, but one couldn't help but feel that disappointing performances by Eason and Powell let Barnet down. Both can be matchwinners; on this occasion, neither made any lasting impact.

The revelation was Thorne who, in the second half especially, exploded past Rundle time and again. Luckily for Wycombe, Barnet failed to exploit Thorne's crosses.

It was just as fortunate for Barnet that after the interval Embury got to grips with Busby. Earlier, Busby had repeatedly beaten Embury on the ground and Barnet's fallability down the middle at one time looked like their undoing. Worley, the old warrior, did not prove the menace we anticipated; Jenkins saw to that.

If Wycombe reckoned on Barnet retreating, they very quickly knew differently and as early as the third minute might easily have been a goal down. Meadows intercepted a nervous back pass by Delaney and Thorne blasted the ball wide. In the 20th minute George, that most willing of workers, hit wide of the same post, but for the remainder of this half the cut-and-dried chances fell to Wycombe.

First, McClelland superbly blocked Baker's close-range shot; then Horseman steered the ball past McClelland and

post; and towards half-time, Barnet survived a tremendous goalmouth mêlée.

Immediately on the restart, Wycombe had a let-off of their own when two panicky defenders scrambled the ball off the line after a run by Eason. The next chance, in the 62nd minute, was also to Barnet, but Eason let Meadows' neat header run off his toe into Maskell's arms. Then Maskell did well to tip a rising shot from George over the top.

NON-STOP

With Embury now getting the measure of Busby, resourceful Wycombe were less threatening than before, despite the non-stop prompting of Lailey. Had Eason given Ward better support at this stage or had Powell utilised his ability to beat a man, Barnet could have finished off the job they set out to do.

Instead, it was Thorne who came into the picture. Five or six times he burst down the left and centred, only for the commanding figure of Delaney to outwit Meadows in the air.

In a final assault on a Barnet defence looking more assured every moment, Wycombe sent up Rundle and Delaney at every opportunity. However, the last chance of a pulsating tie went to Barnet; with seconds remaining, Powell's pass left Eason just Maskell to beat, but he shot hurriedly over the bar and Wycombe had lived to fight again at Underhill.

Wycombe Wanderers: J. Maskell; I. Rundle, C. Gale; K. Stephenson, J. Delaney, J. Lailey; L. Worley, B. Baker, V. Busby, A. Horseman, G. Anthony.

Barnet: McClelland; Lye Jenkins, Ward, Embury, King; Powell, George, Meadows, Eason, Thorne.

R.J.

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BISHOP'S STORTFORD

MEETING stronger opposition than won by the only goal scored at day. Down the slope in the first half to defend for long periods, but it was not until a minute before the interval that Benawri teri

CYCLING